

An aerial photograph of San Francisco Bay. The water is a mix of dark blue and light, milky white, indicating sediment or pollution. A bridge under construction is visible in the upper right. The text 'SAN FRANCISCO BAY' is overlaid in the center.

SAN FRANCISCO **BAY**

A place for people

An economic powerhouse

A threatened resource

A PLACE FOR people

The diverse places that define San Francisco Bay—from tidal marshes to uplands to old commercial salt ponds—serve and inspire the human communities in their midst. Because these landscapes contribute greatly to the quality of life in Bay Area communities, we must restore and protect them.



A BELOVED LANDMARK, recognized around the country and around the world, San Francisco Bay is a source of life-giving resources and awe-inspiring natural beauty. And it is all the more precious for its proximity to teeming towns and cities.

People of all ages and all walks of life stroll, swim, bike, and boat here. They catch fish and

watch birds migrate along the Pacific Flyway. They study the bay—its waters, creatures, and plants—for the lessons science has to offer. And they savor the mere sight of it as respite from urban life.

But the bay is more than just a single body of water. It is a collection of interwoven landscapes, as diverse as they are astounding. All make essential contributions to the quality of life in the Bay Area. All are linked by the threats they face from human impacts and a changing world climate. And all are part of the largest tidal restoration project on the West Coast—a cause that unites citizens, civic leaders, industry, and advocates across the political spectrum.

As partners work to reverse more than a century of pollution and abuse, the mudflats, marshes, uplands, and managed ponds of San Francisco Bay provide an inspiring model of collaborative restoration. They show us how, working together, people everywhere can steward the landscapes that are intimately entwined with their lives.

CANOEING IN HEALTHY BAY WATERS (*above*) is just one of the recreational opportunities provided by restored wetlands like Newark Slough. In revitalized locations around the bay, navigable waterways and biking and hiking trails attract thousands of visitors every year. PHOTO COURTESY OF PELICAN MEDIA.

OFFERING SHELTER AND FORAGING TERRITORY (*right*) for avian life migrating along the Pacific Flyway, San Francisco Bay is a prime location for wildlife viewing. Here birders on the boardwalk of the restored Palo Alto Baylands take in the scene at extreme high tide. PHOTO COURTESY OF PELICAN MEDIA.



FRONT COVER: Aerial view of a recently harvested salt pond near Newark, California (southeast San Francisco Bay), circa 1970. Work begun in 2003 to restore more than 16,500 acres of such salt ponds along the San Francisco Bay shoreline and in Napa County to habitat has been a central component of efforts to restore the Bay's ecosystem. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT CAMPBELL/CHAMOIS MOON.



AN ECONOMIC powerhouse

The hardworking landscapes of San Francisco Bay support commerce and industry, attract millions of visitors, and provide natural protection from pollution, climate change, and rising seas.

WITH MORE THAN 15 MILLION VISITORS TO SAN FRANCISCO ANNUALLY—many attracted by the scenic beauty alone—the bay generates billions of dollars in tourist revenue and gives the Bay Area an admirable global profile. Each year, more than \$60 billion in imports and exports pass through one of the world’s great natural harbors, to and from other Pacific Rim ports. Seventy-one percent of the catch from California’s \$890 million retail fishing industry relies on the bay. And bay views have a significant impact on the value of local real estate—not to mention local quality of life.

But none of these contributions compare to the impact bay wetlands can have by averting catastrophic flooding. Today, the de facto flood protection for much of the South Bay comes from unengineered dirt salt pond levees never intended to protect against rising waters. With local sea levels predicted to increase as much as 5 feet by 2100, placing Silicon Valley in jeopardy, restoring degraded bay landscapes would protect more than \$5 billion in property—not to mention more than 10,000 lives—and provide a cost-effective approach that also maintains the natural benefits of wetlands.



In addition to supporting fisheries, wetlands are the bay’s first line of defense—trapping polluted runoff before it reaches open water, buffering against flooding from rising sea levels and volatile weather patterns, preventing erosion, and capturing greenhouse gases to counter climate change. If our tidal marshes disappear, so will this vital safety net.

BEFORE BEING RESTORED, FORMER SALT PONDS LIKE THIS ONE AT EDEN LANDING (*above*) resemble barren lunar landscapes. After restoration, they become healthy tidal marshes, teeming with plant and animal life and reducing the effects of climate change. PHOTO COURTESY OF PELICAN MEDIA.

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA, SEEN HERE FROM COIT TOWER (*left*), depends on a healthy San Francisco Bay. Restoring former salt ponds and wetlands will help create a vibrant bay, key to local quality of life and to local, regional, and state economies. PHOTO COURTESY OF DANSULLIVANIMAGES.COM.

A THREATENED resource

More than 200,000 acres of tidal marshland graced San Francisco Bay in 1800. Today, there are only 40,000 acres—and we know we must reverse the decline. A healthy bay is essential to a healthy planet. And there is more at stake than can be measured in acres.



THE LARGEST ESTUARY ON THE WEST COAST, San Francisco Bay provides habitat for a rich array of fish and wildlife. Mammals and millions of migratory birds shelter, nest, and feed along the bay’s shores. Steelhead and salmon swim in bay waters. But of the 500 species of wildlife that make their home in the bay, 128 are threatened or endangered as civilization transforms their habitats.

The bay these creatures inhabit is more than a landscape patchwork shaped by human use. Thanks to committed partners—volunteers and elected leaders, scientists and businesses, public and private organizations—this bay has the makings of a conservation success story. More than 15,000 acres have been restored and nearly 40,000 acres acquired to date, at a cost of about \$500 million.

Restored areas like Bair Island, Sonoma Baylands, Napa Marsh, and Crissy Field model what can be achieved when we make healthy bay lands a shared priority. They are places to play and appreciate the biodiversity in our midst. They demonstrate cost-effective approaches to flood control that are essential to protect the Bay Area. And they are the inspiration for the next 60,000 acres we seek to restore—a billion-dollar-plus endeavor. We know we must preserve these wetlands if we are to preserve our way of life, because this bay isn’t just a body of water. It is a source of life and livelihood in our communities, and the natural heritage we will pass to future generations.

IN SEPTEMBER 2010, SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN (*above*) attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the first completed habitat restoration and public trail of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration project, near the Dumbarton Bridge. Senator Feinstein was instrumental in securing the acquisition for restoration of more than 15,000 acres of former industrial salt ponds along the bay shore, and she remains a champion of bay lands conservation. PHOTO COURTESY OF PELICAN MEDIA.

MARbled GODWITS AND WILLETS ON THE DOCK AT ARROWHEAD MARSH (*right*) are just one sign of vitality returning to the landscapes of San Francisco Bay. Fifteen thousand acres have already been restored with support from a diverse coalition of partners. PHOTO COURTESY OF PELICAN MEDIA.

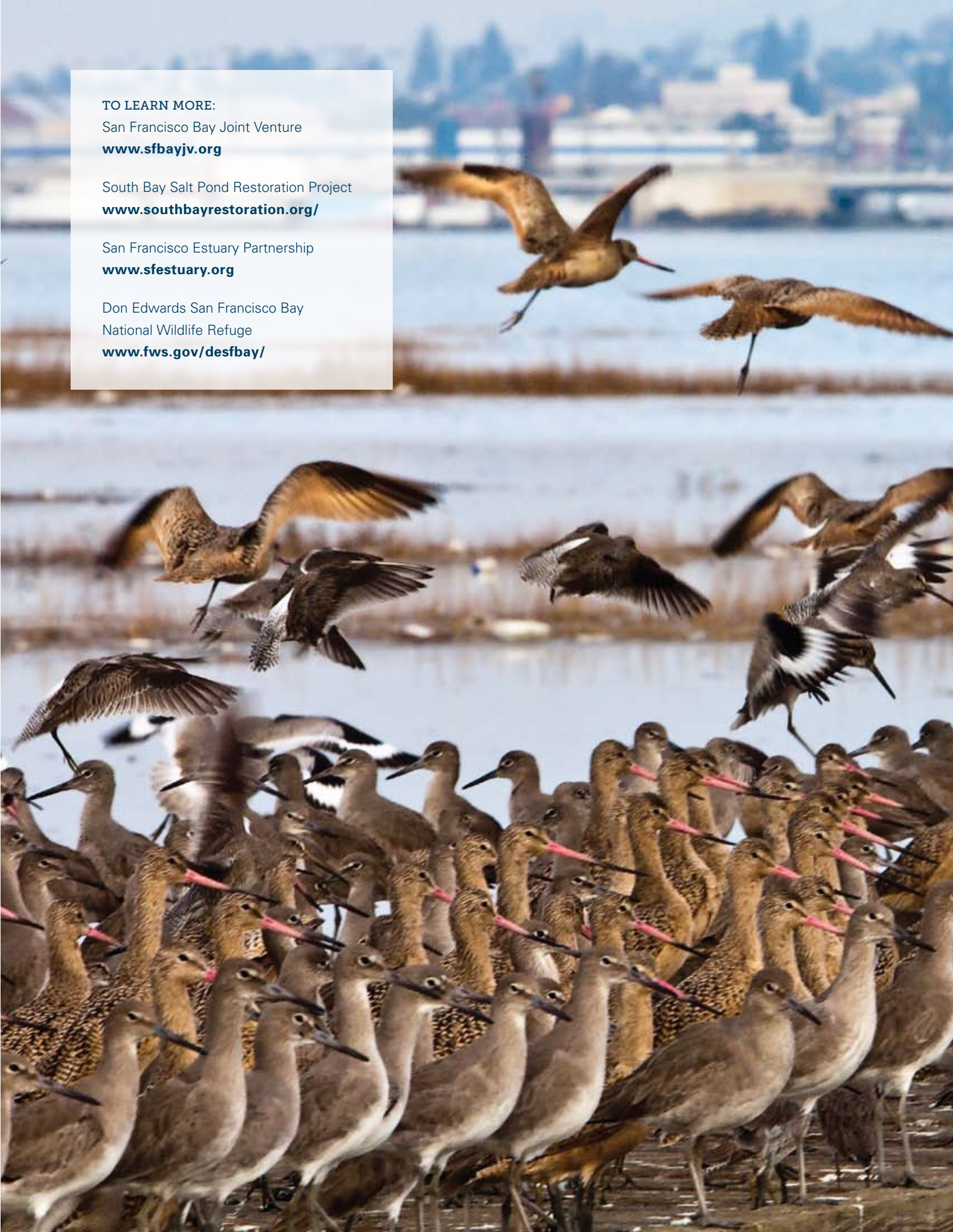
TO LEARN MORE:

San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
www.sfbayjv.org

South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project
www.southbayrestoration.org/

San Francisco Estuary Partnership
www.sfestuary.org

Don Edwards San Francisco Bay
National Wildlife Refuge
www.fws.gov/desfbay/



AN URGENT opportunity

A broad coalition of supporters has championed improving the flood control capacity, as well as protecting and restoring lands surrounding the bay. Our urgent mission now is financing these improvements to safeguard the health of the bay and the surrounding communities.

